



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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Dear Mr. Birns:

Thank you for your letter of March 29 to Deputy Secretary Christopher concerning the human rights situation in Argentina.

As you know, the Administration's human rights policy has greatly affected our relations with Argentina. We have made a concerted effort to demonstrate to the Argentine government our concern -- arms sales have been held back, FMS credits withheld and opposition voiced to Argentine loans in the International Financial Institutions that do not meet basic human needs. We intend to continue to make our concerns known to the Argentines.

The list of some 10,000 names which accompanied your letter was presented to the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs by the Argentine Information Service Center and was airpouched to our Embassy in Buenos Aires with instructions that it be delivered to the Argentine Foreign Ministry. As we did with the two previous Argentine Information Service Center lists presented to the Argentine government, we have asked for comments on the names of the people listed. You may be interested to know that the Argentine government has told us that they are continuing to work on the two earlier presentations.

Concerning the Villa Devoto fire, I share your concern over this loss of life. However, at present we have no information which would indicate that the fire was associated with the human rights issue. To date there is no evidence that political prisoners were involved.

Mr. Laurence R. Birns, Director,
Council on Hemispheric Affairs,
1125 15th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C.

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

The Department is in complete agreement with your espousal of the implementation of the 500-family prisoner parole program. A Department team has just visited Buenos Aires and arrangements are now being worked out to facilitate the entry into the U.S. of those detainees who desire to come to the U.S. and who qualify under our laws.

As you know, the Administration feels strongly that human rights must be a cornerstone of foreign policy. In Argentina and worldwide we are doing what we properly can to bring about an improvement in human rights.

Sincerely,

Fernando E. Rondon
Acting Director
East Coast Affairs

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